

# HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Representative Tom Barrett, Chair

# AGRICULTURE IS THE DRIVER FOR GROWTH IN RURAL AMERICA!



“Rural development is important to Farm Bureau because farmers and their communities need each other. Farm families need local customers, good schools for their children, off-farm jobs for their spouse or other family members. Rural communities need the economic activity that is generated by agriculture.”

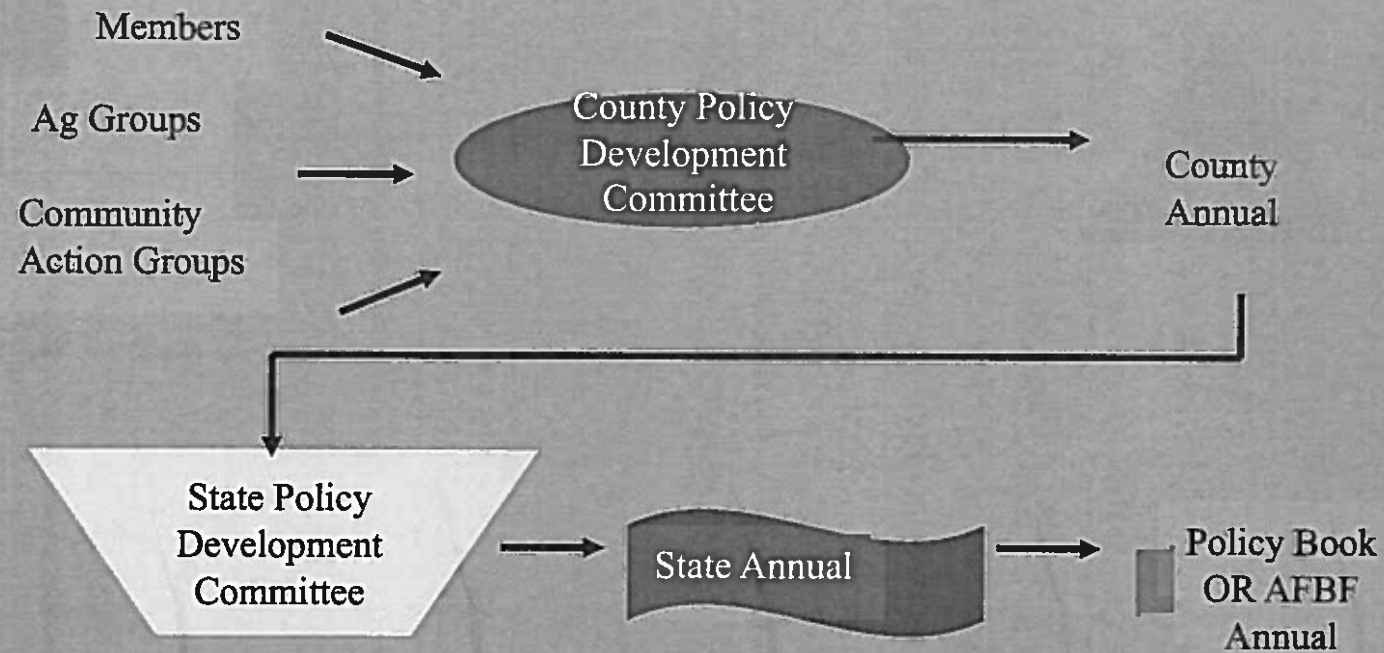
—AFBF President Bob Stallman, 2014 National Summit  
on Rural Entrepreneurship at Georgetown University

# MICHIGAN FARM BUREAU

- Founded February 4, 1919
- State Largest General Farm Organization
- Represent all agriculture
- More than 46,500 farmer members



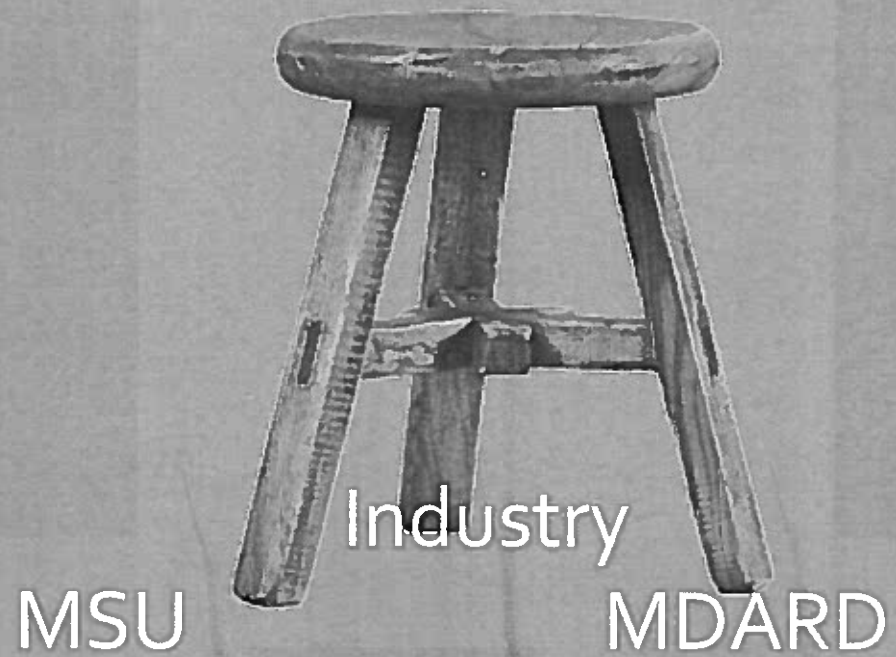
# THE POLICY PROCESS



# MICHIGAN AGRICULTURE FACTS

- The food and agriculture industry contributes over \$100 billion annually to the state's economy. That's an increase of more than 50 percent from 2004 to 2010.
- Michigan's food and agriculture system employs approx. 923,000, which accounts for about 22 percent of the state's workforce.
- Michigan produces over 300 types of commodities, second to only California.

# A COORDINATED EFFORT



MSU

Industry

MDARD



# OUR FOCUS

- Workforce Development
- Industry Growth (Research/Industry Coordination)
- Non-transportation infrastructure



# AG LABOR

- Migrant Seasonal Labor
  - Michigan is at the end of the line
  - MI Housing attracts workers
- Grower Uncertainty with Immigration Debate
  - What will happen at federal level?
  - State by state enforcement devastating to ag labor



# AG LABOR

- What can the state do?
  - Reasonable accommodations for workers while here
  - Focus on attracting workers
  - Immigration enforcement is a federal issue

# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



- Promotion and Education
  - The goal for Promotion & Education in Michigan is to educate the public about agriculture through various educational projects designed for children and adults. In addition to the public, P&E has been charged with educating farmers on key agricultural issues.
- Children
- Ag-in-the-Classroom
- In-service Education for Teachers
- Safety Programs
- Project R.E.D. (Rural Education Day)
- Farm Tours
- Conducting activities at local fairs
- Adopt a classroom



# FARM

Food, Agriculture & Resources in

## Science Lab

What is the FARM Science  
Lab?

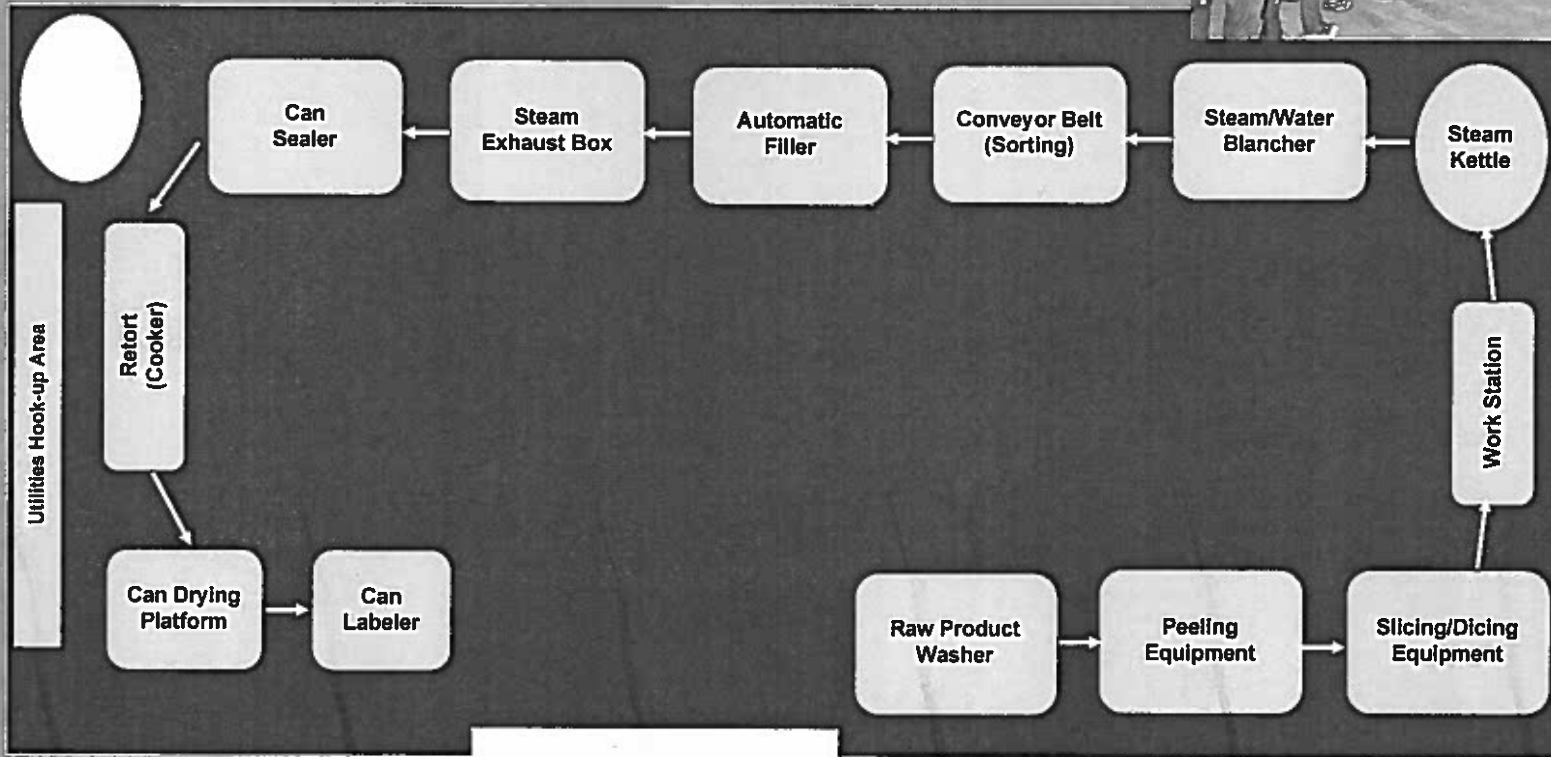
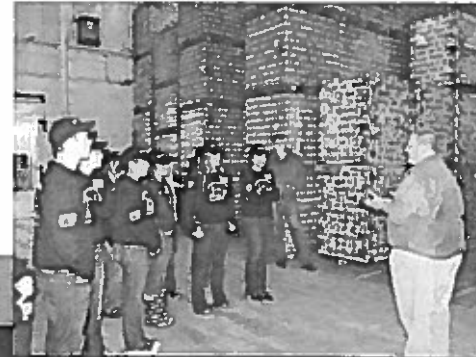
# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



- Continued growth of career technical education at the K-12 level and removing the sunset on MMC flexibility.
- Need for greater coordination between universities and community colleges to fulfill industry needs
  - Plan for MSU to coordinate with nine community colleges to address needs
- *Example: With the opening of Clemens Food Group hog slaughter facility – 800 new employees will be needed. Are we prepared for training? What about the jobs on farm to support the increased supply needs of the plant?*



# INDUSTRY GROWTH



# NON-TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

- If you build it, they will come...
- Natural gas
- Broadband
- Three Phase Electric
- Access, reliability, affordability are key!
- It's not just an access issue, it's a competitiveness issue
  - Economic development, remote learning and job placement
- Remember the Rural Electrification Act, as an example



# WATER USE

- Water is an essential building block of life
- Great Lakes contain over 20% of the world's fresh water supply and over 84% of North America's fresh water
- We have an abundance of water, management of the resource is the key!





# MICHIGAN'S WATER LAW HISTORY

- **Reasonable Use/Riparian Doctrine**
  - Those that have access to water have right to the reasonable use of that resource
- **2003 Laws**
  - Water Use Reporting and Registration
  - Water Conflict Resolution Laws
    - Resolve conflicts between large quantity & residential uses
- **2006 Laws**
  - Creation of Groundwater Conservation Advisory Council
  - Development of Assessment Tool
- **2008 Laws**
  - Adoption of Water Use Assessment Tool and Process
  - Adoption of Great Lakes Compact
  - Creation of Water Resources Conservation Advisory Council

# ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP



- Michigan farmers are leaders in proactive environmental stewardship
- Michigan Agriculture Environmental Stewardship Program (MAEAP)
  - Developed as agriculture's pollution prevention strategy in 1999
- A voluntary, proactive conservation program for farmers
- Three Phases
  - Education
  - Risk Assessment
  - Verification
- Nearly 3700 verifications statewide



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